

## Moral virtues

Every person, especially if a Christian, and even more so if withdrawing from the world to serve the Most High, must, before any action consult their conscience, which will judge whether:

- this act is apt and necessary
- another would be more apposite and more useful
- what are the most suitable means to achieve it
- what the consequences will be

This is known as prudence; it consists in seeking advice from experienced people, being enlightened by those who have learnt the hard way and reflecting before acting. In this, like in all other things, the profound humility recommended by our Saviour is necessary: “learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart“ for humility excludes hastiness and conceited assertiveness that directly denies prudence, a virtue also undercut by fickleness, impulsivity, cunning, hypocrisy. These, God’s handmaiden must shun always.

Some human activities naturally give pleasure, say food drink etc... God’s handmaiden should be content with the basic minimum; That is what we call temperance. Gluttony, its polar opposite amounts not only to the abuse food and drink but to the setting of pleasure before reward.

Such an attitude in God’s handmaiden deserves disgust and censure for she has already renounced all worldly pleasures to sample only spiritual pleasures adduced from her intimate union with God Who lets her taste, on this side of Eden, the happiness of eternal pastures.

In other cases, diverse difficulties get tangled together. That is when God’s handmaiden needs strength as a virtue which will help her stand up to the soul’s passion, find reserves of patience in the midst of her problems, trials and persecutions and have enough initiative and energy to act to the greater glory of God “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1: 7)

Finally humans have social relations whence some duties derive as the virtue of Justice demands: to every one according to their rights; to the superiors, obedience; to authority, respect; to the sisters, sisterly love; to benefactors, gratitude... In the same spirit we have towards God duties inspired by religious virtue coupled up with the virtue of justice: beyond faith, hope and charity that strengthen the bond of the soul with the Holy Trinity, we must honour God by inner and outer, joint and private acts such as adoration, prayer...

Source : Patriarch Elias Hoyek, *La voix du Fondateur*, صوت المؤسس صوت, p. 57-58.